

## THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF LONDON.

THE other day the "Old Westminsters" held a meeting to consider whether it would not be advisable to remove the school from the neighbourhood of the Abbey to some situation where the scholars could breathe the pure air of the country, instead of the heavy mixture of fog and smoke which hangs over the Westminster district for the greater portion of the year. Three centuries ago the school was admirably situated—and the desire of the innovators was but to imitate the example set by Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth when St. Peter's College was first founded. It is an odd coincidence that this discussion should have arisen in the course of this year, 1860—for it was exactly three centuries back, that is, in the year 1560, that Queen Elizabeth really placed this noble foundation in a position to maintain itself as one of the institutions of the country. Henry VIII. was no doubt the original founder, but as his royal way was, he had played such tricks with the abbey revenues, that St. Peter's College would soon have died of financial atrophy, but for the timely interference of his daughter. Queen Bess took the matter in hand precisely three centuries ago.

Now in the year of grace 1560, the young Westminsters who came tumbling out of school to seek for recreation after a due allowance of birch

and Latin grammar, must have scampered about a very different locality from their young successors of our own day. The old abbey was there to be sure—how clean Henry VIII's chapel must have looked in those days!—and Westminster Hall of course, and some queer old houses in the Sanctuary; but our small forefathers must have been able to take their pastime in Tothill Fields in very different style from their descendants. The Thames, which has ever been the great source of recreation and triumph to the Westminster boys, must have glided under the shadow of the old Hall in greater purity than it now does at Halliford or Shepperton. The present Vine Street was a vineyard—for England was a grape-growing country in those days. I am afraid the streets immediately round the abbey must have been a terrible nest of thieves and vagabonds, and that the more aspiring young *alumni* of St. Peter's College must always have been getting into trouble for skulking within the forbidden precincts—but once away from these, they were in the open country. The present proposal is to remove the school to some healthy locality out of town, where the boys may lay in a large stock of health at the same time that they are filling their heads with as much learning as they will contain.

Surely a great deal of cant is talked about the *religio loci*. Boys, with rare exceptions, don't get sentimental about the dust and ashes of their predecessors at particular schools. When they become grown men they fancy they fancied such things—but there is marvellously little of retrospection in schoolboy nature. I was myself for many years a scholar at one of the great London schools, and amongst the great names in our archives were those of John Milton and of the great Duke of Marlborough. I cannot call to mind any instance in which I ever heard any of my schoolfellows mention their names. Not one amongst us of whom I have heard ever became a bit the more poet or warrior because these two tremendous worthies had been whipped through Lilly's Latin Grammar under the same "dear shades" as ourselves. It is to be presumed that if John Milton—according to the old University tradition—suffered a little practical martyrdom at Christ's College, Cambridge, it is not impossible that he got into trouble occasionally about the Gerunds and Supines at an earlier period of his scholastic career. I fully admit that in later years we are all of us apt to grow sentimental about the traditions of our respective schools—I merely deny that we do so whilst we remain *in statu pupillari*. Mr. Disraeli inverted the romantic Etonian.

The question of the removal of our public schools from the heart of London to healthier and more airy situations must soon receive a practical solution; and, as I fancy, there can be but one termination to the dispute. If there is sentiment on one side, there is reason on the other. Let the metropolitan schools by all means be removed to situations near the metropolis—so that even the day-boy difficulty may be overcome. It would not, however, be any great misfortune if the day-boys were

converted into boarders. If there be any value in the public-school system of England—and it is, I think, of the greatest value in the formation of the national character—a “boarder” is, in a ten-fold degree, more of a public-school boy than his young companion who, every night of his life, is thrown back upon the amenities and indulgences of home. Let us not deceive ourselves upon this point; the mere book-learning is the smallest of the advantages which a boy derives from his public-school career. England wants men, more than scholars, although, of course, it is quite right that a limited number of persons in a nation, with special faculties, and aptitudes for the work, should devote themselves to the business of keeping alive the old traditions of sound learning. These are not to be despised. I do not see that the youngsters of the present day are at all likely to grow up into more energetic or useful men than their fathers, although they know all about “ologies,” of which we never heard. They are apt to sneer at our Greek Iambics and Sapphics, and can’t see how such exertations can help us on with steam-engines and tubular bridges; but for myself I confess I should not despair of a lad if I saw that he was a good cricketer, and construed his Sophocles freely. Let us, however, adhere to my point. Winchester, Rugby, Harrow, and even Eton—(I grieve to write *even*)—are better schools, because they are more healthily situated than Westminster, Charter House, St. Paul’s, Merchant Taylors’ and Christ’s Hospital. I am compelled by the necessity for writing the plain truth, to admit that the site of Eton is not well-chosen. We have heard of late a great deal too much of outbreaks of sickness amongst the scholars, and how they have been sent home before the “half” was over, lest a worse thing might befall them. The lowness of the situation, and the immediate proximity of the river, with the enormous quantity of the decaying vegetation by which, in the autumn time, the College is surrounded, are quite sufficient to account for the fact. It may be a question of drainage, and of falling trees; but, despite of the wonderful beauty of the place, it might have been better if the College had been placed high up on Ascot Heath—or, if the river is to be taken as an indispensable condition of Eton life—at least upon elevated ground overlooking the Thames.

The question of a healthy site should be the first to be considered by all parents who are about to send their boys to a public school. Let them live in pure air whilst their constitutions are in process of formation, rather than associate with young dukes. The misery or happiness of their future lives must mainly depend upon their health. A grown man may face atmospheric danger with comparative impunity, which would be—if not fatal—at least permanently injurious to mere youths. The death-test is not a sufficient one. It is not—save to the individuals more immediately concerned—of much consequence whether three or six boys out of 700 or 800 die in the course of a year; but it is of the most serious moment whether all are placed under the conditions best calculated to promote vital energy.

I trust the reader will pardon me if I have insisted a little more gravely than of wont upon this point, for it is one I dare not trifle with. I should rejoice to see the day when every public school in London was removed to some little distance in the country. The site chosen should be somewhere not far from town, both for the convenience of scholars and masters. It should not be too near, lest the task of shifting their quarters again should be too suddenly cast upon those who are to come after us. Robert Sutton and Dean Colet had as little idea of what London would be one day, as we have of what it will be three hundred years hence. Every facility which money could give might safely be reckoned upon, for the present sites of public schools in London are of enormous money-value. They are literally built upon gold. Not so very long since the sum of 200,000*l.* was offered for the Charter House site. It was intended to convert it into a central railway terminus. Unfortunately the offer was refused. Look again at St. Paul’s School. When one remembers the prices which were offered and demanded for that little speck of ground which commanded the south-eastern view of the Cathedral, it seems almost profane to offer even a guess at the value of well-nigh one side of St. Paul’s Churchyard. The “Mereers,” who are the guardians of Dean Colet’s will, might, upon the annual interest of the difference in value between a London and a country site, almost undertake to convert the day boys into boarders, and to find them in beef, lodging, and clothing, as well as Latin and Greek. Let us now throw a glance upon two of the great London schools.

How well I remember the gloomy November morning, now so many years ago, when I was taken down to the iron gratings of that dismal wild-beast cage in St. Paul’s Churchyard, which you may call either the cloisters or the playground, if you are not very particular about using correct terms. The gorgeous beadle—he was an Irishman, and poor fellow! long since gathered to his brother Celts—struck my soul with awe. You passed under a door-way on the southern side which gave access to the stone staircase by which you ascended to the school-room. Running all the way up there was a large flue, and in a sort of cellar below the furnace which heated the air which was delivered by this flue into the school-room above. Now it so happened that upon that memorable occasion, which was indeed the commencement of my academic career, and I suppose because the occasion was memorable, and therefore to be marked by some peculiar solemnity of dress, the authorities at home had despatched me to the scene of action with a beautiful velvet cap with a gold tassel—a sweet thing indeed—upon my head. It was hoped that this gorgeous head-piece would soften the manners of my future companions, and not permit them to be fierce. Alas! it was not so. I was just recovering from the effects of the beadle, and not altogether without reliance upon the splendour of the cap, was beginning to creep slowly up that stone staircase, when, as it were in the clouds above me, I heard a wild cry which was neither a scream nor a shout, but something

like what I should fancy a Red Indian's war-whoop to be in the moments of highest excitement. Then there was a scuffle and a rush as of some ferocious animal bounding down-stairs—then my cap was torn off my head, and, as it were, a thunderbolt struck me. It was no thunderbolt, however, but Joe Day, a large beefy boy, dressed in a suit of bottle-green, which he had evidently out-grown some considerable time. For a while this young gentleman steadily devoted himself to the duty of punching my urchin's head whilst he held up the fatal cap in derision, and requested to know who was my hatter. I could not give him a direct answer, for indeed the cap had not been purchased at any particular establishment, but was the result of much feminine tenderness and ingenuity at home. The possibility of the existence of such wild beasts as Joe Day had never entered into the imaginations of the gentle contrivers of that graceful head-gear. Not satisfied with knocking me about, the horrible boy first kicked my poor cap into the cellar below, and then following it up in person, committed it to the flames. I was not ten years of age at the time, and could as soon have attempted to do battle against Joe Day as against a rhinoceros—but such was my first introduction to public school life in England. Looking back at the transaction now through the long vista of years, I admit that it was an unwise proceeding to send me to a school with any article of dress upon me calculated to attract attention in any way, or to excite the slightest remark. Mothers and sisters, and aunts of England, when you are about to send any little urchin dear to you to a public school, be careful to ascertain the usual standard of dress amongst the boys. Think of Joe Day, and do not make the child too beautiful to mortal gaze, or he will surely be kicked, or possibly be made a target of for small hard balls.

In some way or other I managed to crawl up-stairs; but if it had not been for the awful beadle—who, as I imagined, would have put me to death in some swift and military way had I attempted to desist—I think I should have endeavoured to make my escape. However, there was no help for it; and in a few moments I found myself in the great school-room which was to be the scene of so much suffering to me, and, I am bound to add, of so much enjoyment.

There were four masters in St. Paul's School in those days. I have heard since that they have got some new-fangled mathematical instructors, French teachers, and persons of that description; but in my day all was pure Latin and Greek. The head master was a fine old corpulent Greek scholar of majestic presence, much respected, if not actually beloved by the boys. The idea of attachment or affection from us little fellows towards so awful a personage as Dr. Sleath was out of the question. When he appeared, the school was dumb. We believed in that big man; and afterwards, when I came to years of scholastic discretion, and could appreciate his merits, I knew that he was excellent both as a schoolmaster and a man. He was not a king of boys of the Arnold type. So the lads did the work well, and did not make a noise, he was satisfied. He did not love

to be diverted from his usual functions of educating the classical capabilities of the eighth and seventh forms (the eighth was the highest); and, indeed, whenever he was called in as a *Deus ex machina*, it was not for a pleasant purpose. It became occasionally his duty to cane a little boy in a very solemn way, which operation was effected in the following manner: The captain of the school was sent into the monitor's study for a parcel of canes, out of which the old gentleman chose one, exhibiting considerable taste and discrimination in the selection. He next tucked his long silk divinity gown behind him with one hand, and holding his cane in the other, stalked in a majestic and imperial way to the end of the school-room, where there was a little raised platform, higher by two steps than the floor of the school. I had forgotten to say that this huge divine wore knee-breeches, black silk stockings, and shoes with silver buckles, after the fashion of older days. These little arrangements being made—while there was terror in the atmosphere, and amidst a dead silence—the small culprit was led up to him who was at the same time his judge and executioner. The Doctor then proclaimed, in a sonorous and emphatic way, the misdeeds of which the little boy had been guilty, hurling reproaches at him the while in a biting and soul-destroying manner. "Stubbs Minor wouldn't do his verses, and had told a lie—yes, a lie! wouldn't do his verses, and had told a lie! Stubbs Minor had told a lie—yes, a lie! Stubbs Minor hold out your hand!" Stubbs Minor had been placed on the first step, and held out his hand to receive the terrific blows which the doctor was ready to pour on him from above. The worst policy was to flinch, or withdraw the hand, for in that case the doctor was apt to over-balance himself, and stagger about on the platform in a ludicrous way, when he invariably lost his temper, and a real rage took the place of the simulated anger. Upon such occasions Stubbs Minor was likely enough to come in for a good thing. A caning from Sleath when his blood was up was no joke.

As a schoolmaster, however, he must have been deserving of much praise, for the pupils whom he sent up to Cambridge, carried off the highest classical honours of the university year after year. Fellows of Trinity, Pitt Scholars, Gold Medallists, &c., &c, were plants which Sleath knew how to grow to perfection. The old gentleman was well up in the Greek authors—I give the following little story as ludicrous if not complete and decided evidence of the fact. We had an idea that the Doctor knew Homer by heart. When I had attained such a position in the school as brought me immediately under his care, we were called upon to commit some forty or fifty lines of this author to memory twice in the week. Now, in our class there was a tall, gaunt boy with scarcely the vestige of a nose, who exceedingly disliked the trouble of learning his repetition; but either nature had endowed him with the faculty of emitting Homeric sounds, or he had carefully cultivated the power. Now, when this boy was called upon to perform, he would rise slowly and calmly from his seat—the two highest forms sat whilst they were under fire—and starting with a

few Greek words which he had just cribbed, would proceed somewhat thus

Kai mataroi galaban, kai tene elaphoio paraksas  
Megar thene melapou rodivios theutar epaitas ;  
Tene perinouan ika, felaroldios ouket igoion  
Meeks adiperan efce kai kikety rolpoloios.

Whilst this was going on, Sleath would sit still

upon his chair, soothed by the majestic stream of Homeric sound, and closing his eyes, and tapping his nose with his gold spectacles, would repeat the real words to himself. Had Codd Major hesitated for a moment, so as to call the old Doctor's attention to the enormous nonsense he was talking, he was lost. But he always proceeded with the most imperturbable gravity, never pausing for a



"Coach-Tree." (Page 101.)

word, and going through his work in a matter of fact way which put all idea of jocularly out of the question. The joke, however, used generally to end in serious discomfort to his class-fellows, for do what we would we were convulsed with laughter, whilst not a muscle of his countenance changed. The Doctor would rouse himself from his Homeric swoon at last; and looking round like an angry lion set us a fearful imposition all round—saving to the real culprit; whilst Codd Major was informed, that he was "a good boy, a good boy, a very good boy, indeed!" So much for justice.

The Doctor was famous for the chocolate with which he regaled his guests upon Apposition Days. The Apposition Day was the Speech-day, when the speeches were made, and the prize essays and verses read in presence of a numerous assembly. The school was fitted up with scaffolding, and gaudily decorated with red cloth for the occasion. We little fellows, I am speaking of times before I came under the influence of Codd Major and the Homeric sounds, had a belief that the most distinguished people came from all parts of the earth upon that eventful day, nominally to listen to the views of South Minor upon whether or no elo-



quence was of advantage to a nation ; but actually, and in very truth, to get a cup of Sleath's chocolate. I believe the old gentleman was what is called a *bon-vivant*, and now that the shadow of his power no longer darkens my mind, I can't help thinking that some of the numerous half-holidays which he gave us, ostensibly because the monitors, or some amongst them, had done Latin verses of a very remarkable and entrancing character, in reality fell to our lot because the Doctor wanted a half-holiday for himself. As it was we had three half-holidays a-week, which was a fair enough allowance in all conscience ; but Sleath generally threw in two or three more in the course of a month. The ceremony of allowing this additional recreation was performed in the following way. Just before prayers and dismissal the Doctor would ascend the bad eminence from which he used in his sterner moods to cane the little boys, with a magnificently bound volume under his arm, which contained fair copies of the Sapphics, or Alcaics, which had procured for the school the comfort of a little additional recreation, and announce the gratifying intelligence in this manner : "There will be a play to-day for the compositions of South Major, South Minor, Spolworthy, and Jobs." We were duly grateful to the young poets, but I can scarcely be doing the old Doctor wrong when I think that his appreciation of their performances was more highly strung whenever he wanted the afternoon for playing purposes on his own account.

The sub-master in my day was —. By a singular coincidence between the character and the christian names of this gentleman, his initials ran thus — W. A. C. Now insert an H. between the W. and the A. and the result will express the operation which he was ever performing on the persons of the boys under his care throughout school-hours. He really liked to cane the boys—he seemed to fancy they enjoyed the operation as much as he did, and had invented forms of torture of a playful kind for our benefit. His most dexterous piece of manipulation was this. The patient held out his hand, and — would strike the end of the cane which he held—near the holding point of course—on his own disengaged arm. The effect of this was that the punishing end came down with a jerk upon the sufferer's hand ; but he had attained such a high degree of dexterity that he could chip off the end of a nail, and finally bring the cane back on the rebound well on the backs of the fingers. The pain was exquisite on a cold morning, and how — would chuckle, and grin, and show his false teeth—you could see the gold about them—whilst the wretched boy danced about under the affliction. I do not believe that he was a man of unkindly nature for all that ; but custom had deadened in him all sense of the torture he was inflicting upon others. It was not a pleasant thing to come in late when — had been dining out the day before, and was suffering from headache. As the gentleman who was the lowest master at the time I entered the school still survives, and is still, I believe, connected with it, I will forbear to name him. If I made further

mention of him it would only be for good, for even now that so many years are gone by I still retain a recollection of his kindness to the little urchins who, I dare say, gave him trouble enough, and taxed his patience at times almost beyond endurance. Nor will I speak of the fourth master by name, though he has long since gone to his account. It gives me still a shudder when I think of the savage manner in which he used to cane the boys whenever he became excited—and he was very often excited. As it turned out there was a physical reason for these violent outbreaks of temper ; but he was clearly an unfit person during the later years of his scholastic rule to be entrusted with the charge of boys. I have always heard that in private life he was respected by those who knew him ; but I can only say, that if you would arrive at a just notion of terrorism, imagine yourself to be a boy of about twelve years of age, standing up with — at your back with a cane in his hand, and conjugating the verb *χρησώω*. There was only one boy who ever overcame him in my time, and this was a small damp-looking youth, who possessed the faculty of uttering the most appalling and awful yell that ever passed from human lips : you might have heard it out in St. Paul's Churchyard. Now, as all the classes or forms were indoctrinated in sound learning under one and the same roof, it was not pleasant for — to find himself put in the position of a ruthless tormentor, if it was only that Sleath was there to hear the yells. The boy would stare at him for a second or two before the blow fell, and then writhe about like a wounded snake, whilst he howled in the manner suggested. — would dance round him all the while, and call him a young dog, a young rascal, and what not ; but the lad would keep his eye on the cane, and stand ready for a fresh scream as it fell.

I would not, however, do such injustice to the noble foundation of Dean Colet as to leave it to be supposed that it was a mere torture-house. There was a great deal too much caning, to be sure ; but we had our moments and hours of delight. How good the hot-rolls and pats of fresh butter were when eaten by hungry boys in those old cloisters, the more so that they were the captives of our bows and spears. We were liable to punishment if we were caught either *enudo* or *redeundo* ; but this only added zest to the rolls and butter. What entrancing moments have I not spent at Mother Shand's, who kept the "tuck-shop" in one of the dark streets near Doctors' Commons. How delicious were the hot three-cornered cranberry tarts ! Oh ! to have the faculty of feeling that juicy rapture once more ! and the full cloying voluptuousness of the sausage-rolls ! There were, too, periods of intense happiness when we effected our escape to the coal-lighters which lay snugly in the mud at Paul's Wharf, not the noble structure at which the Waterman's steamers now call for passengers, but then a mere Thames Hard. A game of follow-my-leader over those coal-lighters was not a thing to be lightly spoken of, nor a pull on the river whenever we could club our half-pence together in sufficient quantity to hire a boat for an hour. What a

wonder it was, to be sure, that we were not all drowned under Blackfriars' Bridge. The number of boys at Saint Paul's School was fixed by the founder at 153, in allusion to the miraculous draught of fishes taken by Saint Peter. The school is exceedingly rich, and the scholars as I have before mentioned have constantly attained high honours at the University of Cambridge. Amongst our most eminent Paulines may be mentioned, Sir Anthony Denny; Leland, the antiquary; Milton, Samuel Pepys, Strype, Doctor Calamy; the great Duke of Marlborough, Elliston, the late Lord Truro, and many other English worthies of great repute.

Had I been free to choose that one amongst the London schools at which I should have wished to be educated, I think my choice would have fallen on the Charter House. I am speaking as a man, and my judgment only rests upon the external features of the place. Although, even with regard to the Charter House, I think it would be far better for the pupils, and far more for the ultimate advantage of the school, if it were removed into the country. I am bound to say that it has about it more air, more space, more light, than any other of the metropolitan schools. Westminster is not half as good in these respects—however great in the veneration which attaches to that noble old school, and to the adjacent abbey. But as you stroll along the elevated terrace which lies on the roof of the long cloisters in the Charter House grounds, and are looking over that fair expanse of green sward below, you cannot but see that it is a place in which boys might be reasonably happy. There is a great stillness, too, which is strange in the heart of London. Moreover, as I am informed, the school and grounds are in the healthiest part of the metropolis. I think it would be better for the boys if they had green lanes, and cheerful uplands where they might take their pastime; still, if we are to have a London school at all, give me the Charter House.

As I had not the advantage of being a Carthusian myself, I visited the place in company with a friend who had not been there for some thirty years or so, when he was a schoolboy there himself. I saw the place through his spectacles; but before I make further mention of our pleasant stroll, I would say that some five centuries ago, Sir Walter de Manny took the land on which the Charter House and its dependencies is situated, and assigned it as a burial place for the poor destroyed by the plague of 1349. About twenty years later a monastery of Carthusians was erected upon the spot; and in this monastery, subsequently, Sir Thomas More lived for four years of his life, giving himself up to devotion and prayer. When King Henry VIII. took the various monasteries and religious houses of the country in hand, he seems to have dealt with the superiors of the Charter House, and notably with the Prior, in a very masterful manner indeed: John Howghton, the last Prior, did not fall with sufficient readiness into the ideas of the Royal Reasoner with regard to the King's supremacy; and so, by way of bringing the argument to a satisfactory conclusion, Henry caused him to be decapitated at Tyburn, and ordered that his head

should be stuck up on London Bridge, and his body be placed over the gate of the Charter House itself, all of which was done. Thus, the Charter House was first a burial-ground, and then a monastery for three centuries. For the next seventy years or so it passed through many hands, and seems to have been rather devoted to purposes of entertainment and hospitality than to any other use. Queen Elizabeth stayed there many days; King James I. kept his court there; and so forth. But in the reign of this very King James, and in the year of Grace 1611, the property passed into the hands of Robert Sutton, a wealthy London merchant, who has made the place what it is, and left fair memory of himself to all time.

The founder of the Charter House had two objects in view when he devoted his wealth to the benefit of generations to come. Besides the school, upon the foundation are maintained eighty pensioners, who live together in collegiate style. Each pensioner has a large and comfortable room to his separate use. They dine together in a common hall, which is a very beautiful room, much like the halls of the smaller colleges at Cambridge, but with far braver sculpture and fretwork than I remember to have seen in any of them. They have all necessities found them—except dress—and they are allowed 14*s.* a-year each in lieu of this, and with it purchase their own apparel. Then there is the school, and on the foundation are forty-four scholars, who are supported free of all expense, and there are various exhibitions at the University for their benefit. The bulk of the scholars are boarders and day-boys—that is, those who board at the houses of the masters, and those who only come for instruction in the day time, and return to their own homes at night. The number of scholars at the Charter House has sadly fallen off of late years. Thirty years back they were 500 or 600 in number, now they count, I think, less than 200. This again is a result of keeping the school in town. Parents will send their children to Harrow or Rugby, instead of to a school which is in the heart of London, for all its three acres of playing-green, its garden, and its trees.

Many changes had taken place in the old grounds within the last thirty years. The one which seemed to grieve my friend most, although he is especially a man of peaceful disposition, was the disappearance—I use the word advisedly—of the old fighting-ground. A church now stands where the old Carthusians used to pummel each other's heads. "Look there!" said Jones—we will call him Jones—"that was the place," and added with a withering sneer, "and now see what they have done with it; upon my life, it's too bad!" The school-house stands in the middle of the green. The principal room is of considerable size, and appeared to be well ventilated, which is the main point. There are huge maps round the walls—a good idea, for, in spite of his best efforts to the contrary, a boy must obtain some correct notions of geography when he sees a map before him every time he raises his eyes. The head-master takes his forms in hand in a smaller room which opens out of the large school-room. The most interesting object in this place

is the flogging-block, which is indeed no block at all, but a stout pair of steps, two steps high. The youthful Carthusian who is about to play his part in the good old game of tickle-toy kneels on the lower one of these steps, and remains there whilst the reverend gentleman who is the other performer carries the operation through. There must have been some disagreeable moments spent in that little apartment. How the books and papers which were lying about in the large school-room carried me back in thought to other days! On a scrap of paper the following "exercise" was written in a fine sprawling school-boy hand:

A husbandman one day found a viper, stiff, and frozen with cold. The husbandman took the viper in his bosom, and carried it home. The husbandman put the viper before the fire, but as soon as it was warm and comfortable, the viper stung the husbandman.

*Moral.* Ingratitude is always to be expected from the ungrateful.

Then there were "selections" from Latin authors. One could almost believe the books to be the very ones through which one had been whipped oneself in a former state of existence. Against the walls there were, as well as the big maps, tablets with the names of the young Carthusians who had been the "Orators" and "Gold Medallists" of their day. I did not remark in these lists for the last thirty years the name of any one who had subsequently obtained serious distinction in life, although Carthusians in general hold their own very respectably amongst the marking men of the day, and though in the present century they reckon among their number the names of Grote, Havelock, Thirlwall, Monk, and Thackeray.

We strolled out into the green again, which is so large that one portion of it forms an excellent cricket-ground. It is surrounded by high walls, and is overlooked from the upper windows of the houses in the adjacent streets. J. mentioned to me a story of a young Carthusian's mother which was, I thought, touching enough. She had sent her little boy, then a mere child, to this huge school. It had cost her many a pang to part with him; but as she was a lady of good sense, as well as of gentle heart, she resolved to abstain from visiting him at his boarding-house. She knew it was right that he should be left to take his chance with the others, and she had sufficient strength of mind not to sacrifice his future welfare to the indulgence of her own affection. See him, however, she would, but in such a way that the child could not see her. She therefore hired a room in one of the houses which commanded a view of the Carthusian playing-ground; and here she would sit behind a blind day after day, happy and content so that she could get a glimpse of her child. Sometimes she would see him strolling about with his arm round the neck of one of his little companions, as the way of schoolboys is; sometimes he was playing and jumping about with childish glee; but still the mother kept her watch. You may see the place where she did it. Look yonder, that upper window, just beside the gold-beater's arm.

It is an odd coincidence that the tuck-shop is situated precisely under the flogging-room; so that, whilst one young Carthusian is suffering the tor-

ments of the birched over-head, the friend may be sucking sweet lollipops below. Underneath the long gallery of which I have already spoken there is an old cloister, which looks on the green on one side; on the other there used to be a series of arches, which, probably, in the old time led into the cells of the monks. It is a pity that these have all been bricked up, save one, for it does away with the old-world look of the place. This cloister must be a fine withdrawing-room for the young Carthusians on rainy days. Jones pointed out to me some trees on the other side of the Green, which he told me were known in those latitudes as the "coach tree." What on earth could trees have to do with coaches? The explanation was this. In the old coaching days great numbers of the mails and stage-coaches bound to the northward used to pass just outside the Charter-House walls. Now the boys did not see why they should be debarred from this delectable sight; and, accordingly, they used to climb up these trees to the upper branches, from which they could see the coaches. They had notched the trees, and driven in spikes at ticklish points of the ascent, so that they could climb up the more easily. Another tree (it might have been trees) was remarkable as the hoop-tree. It appeared that, according to the custom of the Charter House, the boys only played at hoops at particular seasons of the year. A Carthusian would as soon have played at hoops out of the season as a sportsman would shoot a partridge in July. When this season was at an end, the correct thing was to jerk the hoops up into this tree, so that it became perfectly festooned with them. Another peculiarity about Charter House hoop play was, that the boys always drove two, and even four, hoops, instead of one, urging them on in teams, side by side, with a long thin stick.

From the Green we strolled on through the pensioners' quarter. The old gentlemen whom we saw about seemed to be cheerful and content enough; and certainly they have but scant cause of complaint. We went first into the Hall, where the cloths were laid for their dinner; they dine in messes of eight. It is an exceedingly fine room in the collegiate style; but as I am not writing a guide-book, I will spare the reader all talk about screens, music-galleries, and so forth. Having seen where the pensioners dine, we thought the best thing we could do was to step round to the kitchen, and see what they were to have for dinner. Some very appetising joints of meat were being roasted before a huge fire for their benefit; and on a side table were placed helpings of gooseberry tart; very nice it all seemed. I should like very well to dine with the Charter House pensioners. Over the fire-place is an inscription,

DEO DANTE DEDI.

And what seemed to me whimsical enough, against the wall there hung the shell of a departed turtle, and on it was engraved in fair characters,

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT.

By no means let us waste the calipash and calipee! I quite agree with the author of the sentiment. We next went to the Chapel, where the pensioners,

and schoolboys, and all who live within the walls of the Charter House, attend service. A very fine old chapel it is, but I have not space to talk about it here.

If I were compelled to send a boy to any of the London schools, and unless there are drawbacks of which I know nothing, I would certainly select the Charter House, in preference to Westminster, St. Paul's, or Merchant Taylors', on account of the Green and playing-grounds. Still, it would be far better if the governors and trustees could

make up their minds to remove their penates altogether to the open country. The number of scholars, both at Westminster and Charter House, is sadly lower than it used to be; and the real reason of this falling off is, that parents very properly prefer to send their children to school in the country. Perhaps on another day I may say a few words about Westminster, the Bluecoat School, and Merchant Taylors'. For the present, as Dr. Sleath used to say, "There will be a play to-day, for the composition of——" GAMMA.



### LONDON CHANGES.

WHAT changes have taken place in London during the last thirty years, over which considerable period of time, I grieve to say, my rational memory can operate with sufficient precision! In those delightful days when my serious troubles were confined to a stiff contest with the impersonal verbs, or physical discomfort in the early gooseberry season, I remember well that we children were permitted every now and then in the spring and summer time to go down a-Maying to Shepherd's Bush. From the Marble Arch to the Green at Shepherd's Bush—with the exception of a low row of houses near the chapel where the soldiers were buried, and the chapel itself, and another row of houses at Nottingham, opposite Holland Park—it was all country. There were Nursery Gardens—there were Tea Gardens—there was a little row of cottages just over against the northern end of the Long Walk in Kensington Gardens, and a public-house called the Black or Red Bull; beyond that nothing but fields and rural sights. I do not remember the existence of Tyburn Turnpike—for it was removed in the year 1825, which date is happily beyond my powers of recollection—but thirty-five years ago there it stood. This gate stood originally at St. Giles's Pound. When it was moved to the westward, the road between St. Giles's Pound and Tyburn

Gallows was called Tyburn Road—it is now Oxford Street.

The readers of the "Times" must have seen lately that there has been a somewhat animated discussion as to the exact spot on which the gallows stood. Having no precise knowledge of my own upon the matter, I turn to the excellent work of Mr. Timbs, entitled "The Curiosities of London," and I find therein the following information upon what George Selwyn would have called this interesting point. The gallows, called "Tyburn Tree," was originally a gallows upon three legs. The late Mr. George Robins, who never lost an opportunity of pointing out any remarkable association connected with property which it was his agreeable duty to recommend to the notice of the British public, when dealing with the house No. 49, Connaught Square, affirmed that the gallows stood upon that spot. Mr. Smith, in his History of St. Mary-le-bone (I am still giving the substance of Mr. Timbs's statements), records that this interesting implement had been for years a standing fixture on a little eminence at the corner of the Edgware Road, near the turnpike. Thousands of Londoners still living must remember the turnpike well; but if I understand my author rightly, this was but the second Tyburnian location of the gallows. The subsequent and final arrangement was, that it should consist of two uprights and a cross-beam. It was set up on the morning of execution "opposite the house at the corners of Upper Bryanstone Street and the Edgware Road, wherein the gallows was deposited after having been used; and this house had curious iron balconies to the windows of the first and second floors, where the sheriffs attended the executions." The place of execution was removed to Newgate in 1783. There must be many men still alive who remember the change. It is not so long since Rogers the Poet died, and he was a young man at the date of the opening of the States General, and he used to tell his friends that he was in Paris at the time, and, if I mistake not, went to Versailles to see the solemnities. Surely if this is so, there must be still amongst us some aged people who can recollect the Tyburn executions. John Austin was hung there in 1783, and that is but 77 years ago—a mere flea-bite, as one may say, on the back of Time. The controversy seems to have been the old story of the shield, black on one side and white on the other—only the Tyburn shield has three sides. These three sides are—I crave large latitude of expression—1st, 49, Connaught Square; 2ndly, the corner of Edgware Road by the old turnpike; and, 3rdly, the corner of Upper Bryanstone Street and the Edgware Road. It is possible there is confusion in the first and second suggestions. It was in the second of these localities that the bones of Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Ireton were found, having been conveyed there by the piety of the Second Charles and his advisers. On the 30th of January, 1660-1, being the first anniversary of the execution of Charles I. which it was possible to celebrate with any degree of *éclat*, the bodies of Oliver Cromwell, of Bradshaw, and of Ireton were disinterred, and actually conveyed in their shrouds



and cere-cloths to Tyburn, and there suspended in the same cheerful costume on Tyburn Gallows, where they hung till sunset. These very dead worthies were then taken down, their heads were struck off, and the bodies buried under the gallows. The heads were set on Westminster Hall. Had I been a Cavalier in those days, how ashamed I should have been of my party! Could they have caught the living Cromwell indeed, and hung him up at Tyburn or elsewhere, there would not have been a word to say against them. One party might use the halter as well as the other the axe; but when the man who had driven them before him like chaff was lying in his quiet grave, to pull him up, and wreak their malice upon the poor remains of him before whom they used to tremble! Fie! Whatever may be said against Oliver Cromwell—at least he was never a resurrection-man. In 1615 Mrs. Turner tripped into the other world at this spot in a yellow starched ruff. One fine morning in the year 1760 Earl Ferrers drove up here in a fine landau drawn by six horses, in his fine wedding clothes, and glided off into eternity in a magnificent way at the tail of a silken rope. In 1724 Jack Sheppard escaped at the same place from this world to the next, and the following year Jonathan Wild the Great also concluded his career at Tyburn. A few more remarkable executions—they are all carefully noted up with particulars in "The Curiosities of London," are—1388, Judge Trevelian for treason; 1449, Perkin Warbeck; 1534, the Holy Maid of Kent; 1628, John Felton, assassin of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham; 1726, Catharine Hayes, burned alive for the murder of her husband; 1767, Mrs. Brownrigg, for murder; 1777, Dr. Dodd, for forgery; 1779, Rev. James Hackman, for the murder of Miss Reay. Who talks of

—wanting good company  
Upon Tyburn Tree?

—but enough of this.

Where the magnificent squares, crescents, and places of the modern Tyburnia now stand, thirty years ago there were brick-fields, corn-fields, and what not. I can remember very well the time when a commencement of Tyburnia, or North Western London was made. A few rows of houses, isolated from the rest of the world, were run up in a dubious way; and it was supposed that no one would be mad enough to live there. A gentleman with whom we were acquainted was amongst the first to break the ice; and, of course, must have been allowed to enter upon the premises which would now let at a very high rental, for a mere song. He was to be the bait, or call-bird. It seems but yesterday that we drove, a family-party, to dine with the *penitus toto divisum*, and how the heaps of mortar and compo were lying about, to be sure, and what scaffoldings were erected in every direction, and how it seemed to be a problem whether we should seek for our dinner in this or that carcass of a house, for a finished "family residence" with oil-cloth in the hall, and blinds to the windows, seemed to be perfectly out of the question. It really appeared as though we had come upon an excursion in search of Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday. When we bumped up to the place at

last what a magnificent house it was, and when the curtains were drawn how we congratulated our friend, and when we peeped out how we consoled with him! He had indeed chosen the desert for his dwelling-place, and the dog had also contrived to provide himself with one fair spirit for his minister. How would the theory answer in practice? I know how it has answered. The hermit of Tyburnia is surrounded by human habitations in the year of grace 1860; the fair spirit is now enormously stout, and takes her airings in a yellow carriage, with a fat poodle looking out of the window. Her third daughter, Georgiana, three years ago married a young fellow whose regiment was at the Cape; and either at Port Natal, or Cape Town, or in some such outlandish locality she may now be found, having in her turn assisted to replenish the earth, as we were informed by recent advices. By the way, it is a somewhat curious secret which a South Kensington builder imparted to me the other day. In a new neighbourhood, where as yet not a house is let, if you enter yourself on the list of intending tenants the agent will put a few questions to you in a cursory way, of which you may not be able to see the drift. His real object is to ascertain if you are a Paterfamilias, with a beautiful bevy of amiable daughters, in which case you will be allowed to have the house upon easy—almost upon any terms. The calculation is that in order to assist the many despairing young gentlemen who may be going about the world in a state of utter misery for the want of sympathy from gentlest womanhood, the P.F. and his amiable lady will give a series of evening entertainments in the course of which certain consolations may be suggested to the mournful band. "The street" will be well lit up, "the street" will resound with the sweet strains of the *cornet-à-pistons*, "the street" will be full of carriages, not impossibly a wedding will take place in "the street." What think you of this by way of an advertisement for a young and rising neighbourhood? Nieces would not do as well, for even the fondest uncle and aunt would only make spasmodic efforts to help a niece in "getting off;" but in the case of daughters the evening parties assume a chronic form.

This Tyburnia is all new, it is the newest thing in Western London. By the side of it Belgravia is almost an antiquity. Tyburnia, however, has never fairly taken rank amongst the fashionable quarters of London. It is inhabited by enormously wealthy people, the magnates of trade and commerce; by contractors; by professional men who have succeeded in obtaining the golden prizes in their respective callings. But it never has been, and never I think will be, "fashionable," in the same sense as Belgravia, or, of course, that wonderful Quadrilateral which stands between Oxford Street and Piccadilly, Park Lane, and Bond Street. There was a moment when Tyburnia had its chance, and I cannot say that it missed it through any fault of its own. Some evil spirit who wished ill to Tyburnia and the Tyburnians whispered it into the ears of the Prince Consort and his fellow Commissioners of the Great Exhibition of 1851 to make a great National Art Repository at South Kensington. Out of this



suggestion South Kensington has grown. Although the distance from Central London is even greater, it is a curious fact that the "genteel" people, with incomes varying from 500*l.* to 2000*l.* a-year and upwards are flocking to South Kensington as fast as the houses can be run up. You can't exactly say that this is the effect of tradition, for the old court end of the town about which Leigh Hunt used to tell us such pleasant stories, is by no means identical with this modern creation of South Kensington. It can scarcely be regarded as a question of healthier and better air, for there is no healthier quarter of London than Tyburnia; but somehow or other it has missed the perfume of gentility after the school of dowagerhood and my Lord's Poor Cousins. Perhaps the millionnaires made too heavy a rush upon the quarter at once, and frightened away the timid kine whose natural pastures were not at the diggings. They could scarcely hope to run their graceful little tea-parties with success against the magnificent banquets of the more opulent *parvenus*, and so adhered for a time to little white genteel streets in Belgravia. From these they have timidly stolen forth, occasion offering, and the family banker being propitious, to little squares and streets Kensington way, where they take nice little houses, which they are not indisposed to let once and again when the season is at its height on one genteel pretext or another; and so they play their part. The end of it, however, is, that although Tyburnia may glisten with gold, it has very little to show in the way of purple, faded or otherwise.

I cannot remember the time when Belgrave Square was not; but those of my contemporaries who have preceded me but a short way on the path of life tell me that they recollect it well when the site was called the "Five Fields." My boyish memory will not carry me back beyond the year 1829 or thereabouts; and I find by reference to the same instructive work of Mr. Timbs which I have before quoted, that Belgrave Square was built by Mr. George Basevi, the architect, and finished in the year 1829. The place before this was a miserable swamp, and I have been told by older men that in their boyhood they have shot snipe in the Five Fields; others have informed me that they used to go botanising there for curious plants. Mr. Thomas Cubitt, the great builder and contractor, may be said to have invented Belgravia. He dug into the swamp, and found that it consisted of a shallow stratum of clay, and that below this there was good gravel. "The clay he removed and burned into bricks; and by building upon the substratum of gravel, he converted this spot from one of the most unhealthy to one of the most healthy, to the immense advantage of the ground landlord and the whole metropolis." I think Mr. Basevi and Mr. Cubitt must have understood the mystery of lord-and-lady catching better than their brethren of Tyburnia. They seem to have built a great square first, and to have filled it with grandees; and from this they built away other smaller squares, and streets of all dimensions, which were gradually taken up by people of the same class, and afterwards by their imitators and admirers, who loved to dwell in the odour of

perfect gentility. The plan pointed out by Mr. Cubitt was certainly an inspiration of genius, for before his time all builders who looked at the place gave a glance at the surface water, and turned aside in despair. There was another consideration which might perhaps have prevented tenants from flocking to this quarter, and that is the extreme lowness of the situation. I do not pretend to give exact figures, but I can scarcely be wrong when I say that the Belgravian district is a hundred feet lower than the higher and more northerly districts of London. Healthy the district most certainly is, as I can testify myself from having resided many years within its limits. It was a very common thing on returning home at night by Piccadilly in the season of fogs to see the fog lying heavily on that famous thoroughfare; but when you turned down upon Belgravia all was clear. Chelsea, which lies even lower, has always been reputed a healthy suburb. In the last century it was the residence of Doctor Arbuthnot, Sloane, Mead, and Cadogan; and I suppose the physicians knew where to find the best air.

Endless have been the changes in this Belgravian district. The Orange Garden in bygone days stood upon the site of the present St. Barnabas Church. Indeed in the old, old times, Pimlico was essentially the district of public gardens. It is notorious that the Queen's Palace of Buckingham House stands on the site of the old Mulberry Gardens, so famous amongst our dramatic writers. Precisely one hundred years ago—that is, in the year 1760—there was nothing between Buckingham House and the river, looking either south or west, but a few sparse cottages and the Stag Brewery. What is there now? The name of Pimlico has often puzzled me, and if any one can throw any additional light upon the subject I shall be glad. All I can do for the information of others who may have taken this momentous point into consideration, is to copy for their benefit the following brief suggestions from "Notes and Queries." "Pimlico is the name of a place near Clitheroe, in Lancashire. Lord Orrery (in his Letters) mentions Pemlicoe, Dublin; and Pimlico is the name of a bird of Barbadoes, which presageth storms." The district and its vicinage in some measure keep up the old reputation as the quarter for public gardens, inasmuch as just above Battersea Bridge are Cremorne Gardens. Cremorne House was formerly the residence of a Lord Cremorne; a title which still exists. The family name is Dawson of Dartrey, Rockcorry, Ireland. The river frontage of Chelsea seems to me less changed than most things in London since I was a boy. It seems to me that I remember Cheyne Walk as long as I remember anything, with Don Saltero's Tavern, made so famous by Steele, and subsequently by Benjamin Franklin. If Kensington is called the Court end, Chelsea might fairly be called the literary end of the town, for here in former days lived Steele, Addison, John Locke, Lord Shaftesbury, Smollett, and Swift. Sir Robert Walpole, too, had a house here. As a question of age I ought easily to remember the Chelsea Bun House, but I do not. It was only pulled down in 1839 or 1840, an affair of yester-

day, so that this famous bun factory ought to stand fresh in the recollection of all Londoners who are more than thirty years of age. I find it recorded, that the bun trade began to decline when there was an end of Ranelagh. Now Ranelagh came to an end contemporaneously with the pseudo Peace rejoicings at the beginning of this century. The Peace fête was the last of its glories—that was in 1803. It had a run of about sixty years, having been opened in the year 1742. As some persons may be curious to know its exact site, I may mention that it was situated just to the east of Chelsea Hospital, and part of the ground is now included in the old men's garden of that institution. The old veterans of the Hospital are again amongst the few unchanged features in London life. Just what I remember them when I was a little boy, just the same were the gnarled old relics of the wars whom I saw lounging and sauntering about in front of the Hospital the other day. Whatever may be the subjects to which we are indifferent, most people—or they must be very miserable dogs indeed—care about the duration of human life. Now if the records of Chelsea Hospital are true, here the true temple of longevity is to be found. What think you of the following dates, which Mr. Timbs obtained from careful inspection of the Hospital burial-ground:—

Thomas Asbey . . .	died 1737 aged 112
Captain Laurence . . .	„ 1765 „ 95
Robert Cumming . . .	„ 1767 „ 116
Peter Dawling . . .	„ 1768 „ 102
A Soldier who fought at the Battle of the Boyne }	„ 1772 „ 111
Peter Brent, of Tinnmouth . . .	„ 1773 „ 107

The ages of the pensioners seem to vary from sixty to ninety, and in 1850 there were said to be two old fellows in the Hospital who had attained the age of 104. I wonder what kind of certificates of birth these aged pensioners could have produced, for from the ages which they claim, their reckonings must have run from periods when it was exceedingly difficult to arrive at satisfactory conclusions as to the date of birth. When we remember further that the claimants were for the most part taken from the very humblest classes of society, amongst whom you could scarcely derive assistance from family Bibles, and similar records, the difficulty becomes enormously increased. Be this, however, as it may, Chelsea Hospital and the old pensioners are amongst the unchanged things of London.

The suburb of Kensington Proper seems to have varied less than most of the others of which I have made passing mention. Some rows of modern houses have indeed grown up about Camden Hill; but the High Street, and the square, and the turning up by the old church are pretty much about what I remember them thirty years ago. To be sure, in the road from Hyde Park Corner to Kensington Church there is a notable change. That little low row of houses close to Saint George's Hospital, and in one of which lived and died Liston the comedian, is indeed one of the monuments of London as it was thirty years ago; but we knew nothing of

palatial residences and Gibraltar Houses, and Princes Gates. I cannot say I recall to mind the exact aspect of the place. There were nursery gardens, and a large mansion or two, Gore House being one of them of course, and there was a little row of houses just before you came to the turning known in these, our later days, as Hyde Park Gate South; but there was no approach to continuity as at present, even in the year 1830. It is said that within the memory of man a bell used to be rung at Kensington to call the people together who intended returning to town, so that they might travel together, and afford each other mutual aid and protection against the highwaymen. Only conceive Claude Duval, or Sixteen String Jack, operating in front of Sir C. Cresswell's house, or Stratheden House, at the present day! The story of Gore House is one of the most melancholy memorabilia of this district, on account of poor Lady Blessington and her ruin. I had considerable respect for Alexis Soyer, but living, as I did, close to the spot at the time, I was not altogether displeased to see that the scheme for turning the place into a kind of Suburban Restaurant did not succeed, and that the more, as the speculation was said to be mainly the concern of some Liverpool Jews, of whom Soyer was only the paid agent. A good deal of old Kensington and Chelsea remain what they were, not much of Brompton; but if my life is extended to something like the length of the usual human tether, I shall have lived through the inception and growth of Tyburnia, Belgravia, and South Kensington. In point of fact London—the London in which people live—will almost have changed its site in my time. The districts in which the fewest changes have occurred are May Fair, Marylebone, and Bloomsbury. The City has been all pulled to pieces. A steady old merchant who had been in the habit of making his appearance on 'Change some forty years ago would be not a little surprised with new London Bridge, and King William Street, and the new Exchange, and the new Fish Market, and new Cannon Street, and the removal of the market from the middle of Farringdon Street opposite the Debtors' Prison, and more recently of that abominable old nuisance, Smithfield Cattle Market. I remember old London Bridge very well, and the fall of the water at particular periods of the tide; but all that has been changed in a very effectual way. In Bloomsbury we have the new front of the British Museum, and a parcel of bran-new squares, such as Gordon Square, &c. As I could not call to mind what had stood in the place of University College, Upper Gower Street, I referred to the books, and find that the first stone was laid by the Duke of Sussex in the year 1827, and the building was opened in 1828—consequently I know not what were the antecedents of its site. The Regent's Park, I think, remains much what it was—a few rows of terraces may have been added, but the recollection of most of my contemporaries will, I suppose, agree with my own, that even in those days the Regent's Park was the place to which we were driven by our cruel parents before breakfast for the benefit of our constitutions, and to the grievous annoyance



of our tempers. Even now at the distance of thirty years, and though I freely admit that certain visits to the Zoological Gardens, and certain interviews with the bears have not been altogether without a soothing and balsamic effect upon my spirits, I never can feel quite comfortable in the "outer circle." How I used to rejoice when those houses surmounted by the plum-puddings with spikes came in sight, because then I felt secure that the weary matutinal pilgrimage was nearly at an end. The improvement of St. James's Gardens and the most judicious closing-up of the unwholesome tank at the top of the Green Park are quite of modern date.

Many of the places of suburban resort round London are very little changed. It is wonderful, for example, how lightly Time has laid his finger upon Hampstead. Of course there have been great changes in the Hampstead Road, and that pleasant back way by Primrose Hill, and through the fields pied with daisies and buttercups, has been so be-bricked and be-mortared as to be scarcely recognisable. The other day, however,—it was on a Sunday—I wandered up to Hampstead; and really, except that the distant ground to the eastward is more thickly built over than of old, there is marvellously little of change about the old place. There is Jack Straw's Castle, and that melancholy-looking house which forms the end of the wedge which separates the Highgate from the Hendon Roads just looking as melancholy as ever. There, too, are the donkeys standing by the little pond, who must be the grand-donkeylings, or great-grand-donkeylings, of the very animals I used to bestride in my own school-boy days. Yes! here comes a party—by George, we must be in the year 1832!—two, sort of half-housemaid, half-young-milliner-looking girls are skurrying on, with a youngster, who may rise to be a costermonger, behind them, urging the poor brutes on by severe flagellation. Then there is a showily-dressed young "gent" who is with them, and who no doubt would be happy to charm their hearts by a display of noble donkeymanship. The donkey-boy, however, is so sedulously intent upon the animals on which the young ladies are seated that he does not notice that the young gent has fallen astern; and there he is in the swampy ground, with evident symptoms of intentions on the part of the poor outraged brute to put his head between his knees, and toss his inexperienced rider into the muck. I hope he may. Now the donkey-boy goes to the young man's rescue; and as I pass the ladies on my way to the pine-tree group, I hear one of these fair beings say to the other, "Heliza Jane, can't you lend us an 'air-pin?' the intention of the young lady obviously being to use the implement in question as vicarious of the spur. To be sure, it is aggravating when you are boiling with the fury of the race, to find the noble animal which should carry you on to victory, or at least to a noble struggle, standing stock-still, and positively declining to proceed one step further. I hope this little fellow in knickerbockers, and his bright little sister, who are dashing past the very spot where John Sadleir was found one foggy morning with the cream-jug in his hand, will have better luck. Her little hat

falls off; but not for that will she stop. The donkey-boy no doubt will see to that; but she won't be behind in the race for a hundred hats. They have evidently chosen, or rather there have been selected for them two prime donkeys—I dare say the best to be found amongst that kind of donkey-Tattersall's, which is held under the trees by the pond where Irving used to preach when his wits were gone.

I wish I had space to talk of the humours of the tea-gardens, more especially at the Bull and Bush, which is about three-quarters of a mile beyond Hampstead in the hollow. What fun it is to sit out in the arbours and have tea amongst the spiders' webs, and how much better the cream and butter are there than they are anywhere else. How Mary Jane and her young man make off to the pine-trees, and love to sit there in heathery dalliance. I wonder what they're saying. It is something not altogether dispensing to the young lady, that is clear; but, I dare say, twenty years hence, if they thrive in business, and the young man is "steady," and Mary Jane "makes him a good wife," they will wander up to the pine-knoll, and enjoy the thought of this distant sunny afternoon, in the year 1860, very much indeed,—“Twenty years ago now, only think, Mary Jane!” That will be a great deal better than to be compelled by hard fate to give utterance to the same lofty sentiment in the year 1860,—the sentiment referring back to, or involving in its scope, A.D. 1840. That's where the shoe pinches. It is well with you, Mary Jane!

I have talked a good deal about places, and the mere brick and mortar features of the town, but what a change there is in the London streets in other respects within the last thirty years. I fancy I remember the first omnibus—if it was not the first, it was amongst the first. My recollection is of a great blue-bottle Shillibee, which, on one particular day—I forget in what year—made its appearance in the New Road, to the grievous astonishment of the lieges. Just about the same time there was a steam-carriage which tried its fortune for a short time—if I remember right—in the same locality, and set all the horses capering and prancing. No wonder; that was opposition with a vengeance. It was some time, I think, before the omnibus system was developed to any great extent. Those long machines used to go pounding up and down the New Road, plying between Maida Hill and the Bank for the accommodation of the City people, long before they were tried upon the other thoroughfares. However, when the system was fairly adopted it grew with a witness, until now the principal streets of London are so crowded with them that you can scarcely get to a railway station in time, save you allow yourself an hour to spare for stoppages caused by omnibuses on the road. I am sorry to say I can remember the old Hackney coaches, and Jarvey with his grizzled eyes, and his multitude of capes, and the moulty straw, and the ever-clinking steps. The shape of the cabs, too, has undergone strange permutations. At one time the driver sat before you on a little seat upon the flap or wooden apron; then he was stuck on to the side; then he was perched on to

the roof; then a vehicle was tried in which two passengers could sit face to face, but sideways as regarded the horse, as people sit in omnibuses. The Hansom cab is the last expression of civilisation.

It may be observed that I have said very little of London on the Surrey side, and the omission proceeds from the very simple reason that I know little or nothing about it. One cannot however drive to the Derby, or to Dulwich, or to the Crystal Palace, or down to Greenwich, without seeing that the town has increased in this direction quite as much as in others. The whole aspect, too, of the river is changed: where there used to be watermen and their wherries, we now have penny and half-penny steamers. Perhaps the greatest change of all has occurred in the numbers of the population. To put this fact in a more striking point of view let us go considerably further back than thirty years ago. Three hundred years ago, in 1560, London contained 145,000 inhabitants. In 1800, the population had reached the figure of 850,000. For the present century the results are as follows:—

1801	.	.	.	.	.	958,863
1811	.	.	.	.	.	1,050,000
1821	.	.	.	.	.	1,274,800
1831	.	.	.	.	.	1,471,941
1841	.	.	.	.	.	1,873,676
1851	.	.	.	.	.	2,361,640

What change shall we find in 1861—next year—when the census is taken? Caesar never thought it worth his while to make mention of so paltry a place as it was in his day, although he entered the Thames. Compare Rome and London in 1860. A few *changes* have occurred.

GAMMA.



## A VISIT TO AN OLD HALL AT ELTHAM.

One who treads alone  
A banquet-hall deserted,  
Whose lights are fled,  
Whose garlands dead,  
And all but he departed.

ST. SWITHIN, never so dreary since 1829, has given us this year drenching rains and nipping winds: and we have only exchanged the chilly room and cold firegrate, for sloppy streets, and a murky sky overhead. A bright sun and a welcome holiday were not to be neglected, and we therefore bethought ourselves of a trip, to take advantage of the rare opportunity of a lull in the long bad weather, that has made us doubt the veracity of the almanacs. Emerging from the Railway Station, at Blackheath, we crossed the Common, rejoicing in the fine clear air that always blows across its undulating range of turf, and wiled the way by thinking of the days when Queen Caroline, and Lord Chesterfield, and the great General Wolfe took their walks here, and Vanbrugh was piling up his heavy architecture on Maze Hill. Behind us we see where the Astronomer Halley sleeps; on the left we see Charlton with its fine Jacobean house, and Woolwich, where the gallant Lovelace was born, with its Arsenal and Dockyard, its constant bugle-calls and thundering artillery, booming among the marshes, or echoing from the mortar battery near the Rotunda. Before us, on Shooter's Hill—a dangerous pass for travellers in the days of the outlaws who lurked in the adjoining woods—rose the quaint tower, known to the vulgar as "Seven Dogs Castle," which commemorates the capture of Severndroog Castle, on the coast of Malabar, by Sir W. James. We shall soon look upon his grave at Eltham, whither we are going. We think of Falstaff's robbery in "Henry the Fourth," and the two hundred courteous archers who, on a certain May-day, entertained here another Henry with one of his "Sweet Kates" in booths with loyal cheer and pageants; and then take our way, avoiding the somewhat dull road that lies between the hill and the village by following the field-path, with a right pleasant companion, through corn land and meadows purple with clover, over stiles and along hedges where the only flowers were those of the woodbine, the chamomile, the bramble, and the pimpernel. But the open petals of the latter reassured us, as we looked up with some dismay on the threatening clouds.

The title of Eltham was borne by John of Eltham, son of Edward II., who died in 1334: his elaborate effigy in St. Edmund's chapel, in West-

minster Abbey, presents the earliest specimen of a ducal coronet. By a confusion of names, the old hall has been frequently described as King John's. But omitting all memory of Lackland, we can re-people it with better men than he. The manor was held by the soldier-bishop, Odo, of Bayeux, by de Vescis, and de Mandevilles, and de Scropes; but the Crown long preserved a moiety, and now holds its entire extent. Many a gay and gallant gathering of barons and knights, courtiers and fair dames, have been held in the old palace. In 1270, Henry III. kept Christmas here, and Lionel the Regent, in 1347; Richard II., in 1384 and the two following years; Henry IV., in 1409 and 1412; we have Henry V. in 1414, and his weak successor in 1429. The last monarch who made Whitsun and Christmas cheer, was Bluff Hal, in 1515 and 1526; but on the latter occasion he came with so few attendants, owing to the raging of the plague, that the townsfolk, by way of distinction to past merry making, called it the Still Christmas. Anthony Bec, the only English Patriarch of Jerusalem, bestowed his new buildings on Queen Eleanor, and died here in 1311. Parliaments too, in 1329 and in 1375, have sat in the old Palace; in 1364, the captive John, king of France, came as an unwilling guest, and the exile King Leo, of Armenia, in 1386, when Richard II. fully maintained his reputation for superfluous hospitality.

Froissart, here a frequent guest, records how on a Sunday afternoon, in 1364, Edward and Philippa waited at the gates to receive the fallen monarch, and how, "between that time and supper, in his honour were many grand dances and carols, at which the young Lord de Courcy distinguished himself by singing and dancing." It was a strange exhibition in the presence of a captive prince, who afterwards pathetically applied the complaint by the waters of Babylon to his own sorrowful case—"How can I sing in a strange land?" But the fascinating young nobleman contrived to win and wed the Princess Royal of England, so that he had no cause for regret on his own account. Eltham and Shene were the favourite palaces of Richard and the "good Queen" Anne, of Bohemia, the famous lady who introduced the side-saddle. Parliament met here to arrange the king's second marriage with Isabella of Valois, who was brought hither after her bridal, and set out from the gates to her coronation, as her namesake "the she-wolf of France" had done more than a century before, with her unfortunate husband, Edward of Carnarvon. Here, too, Henry IV. forbade the French ambassadors to speak of Richard to Isabella, as one too young (so the grim hypocrite declared) to know of the sorrows of this world. Here, too, he himself was espoused to Joanna of Navarre, in the presence of the primate and chief officers of state; Antonio Riezi acting as the lady's proxy, and actually having the ring placed upon his finger.

Henry IV. feasted in fear, for the Duke of York, so report ran, designed to scale the walls, and rob him of life and crown together; and here he actually sickened in death-like trances of his mortal disease, before the approach of the unwelcome guest, who knocks with equal foot at cotters' doors



and at the golden gates of palaces. Two thousand guests in 1483 were entertained at Christmas, by Edward IV., whose daughter Bridget, who afterwards assumed the coif and wimple among the nuns of Dartford, was born here.

A more memorable personage, Philippa of Clarence, was cradled here; she married Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March; and in her children centered the title to the crown of England.

In this palace, unhappy Henry VI., unconscious of his critical position, forsook his studies to hunt and follow field sports, under the watchful eye of his keeper, the Earl of March, while his wife and son, for whom he had restored the palace, were sheltering in Harlech Castle.

Henry VII. at intervals retired to Eltham, and Queen Mary or Queen Elizabeth would spend a few days in the almost forsaken palace, and King James I. has been known to pass a morning visit here; but Greenwich and Theobald's appeared to be more inviting to kings and queens, and the hall was left to the keeping of Sir John Gates, till his head fell on the scaffold; to Sir Christopher Hatton, "the dancing Chancellor;" and last of all, to Sir Robert, Earl of Essex, the noted general of the Parliament, who died here, 1646. The manor was afterwards bestowed on loyal Sir John Shaw, who befriended Charles II. when in exile at Brussels and Antwerp.

There is little to attract attention in the quiet rural village of Eltham, whose name of Eadlham,



the old home, takes us back to the memory of a time long since past. Its street is now no more rendered lively by the cheerful bugle and the rattling wheels of the coaches to Folkstone and Maidstone; but its inn-gardens, with games of Mississippi and bowls, attract still the holiday makers of Woolwich and Charlton, on bright sunny afternoons, in summer and autumn. The training and breeding stables of Messrs. Blenkiron, often filled with as many as 500 horses, many of them of great value, and the passage of artillery on the march, may be reckoned among the chief objects of interest and enlivenment in the little village. Its church of St. John Baptist boasts a shingled spire, and a few architectural remains, in the north aisle, comparatively ancient, by contrast

to the ugly brickwork and modern windows, which constitute the large portion of the structure. The interior will not repay inspection, but there are some graves and monuments that deserve a mention. Here lies memorable John Dogget, a manager with Wilks of Drury Lane theatre, for whom Congreve wrote stage-parts, and whose name is still preserved by the badge and coat which he offered as an annual prize for watermen, in loyal commemoration of the accession of George I. Sir W. James, of Severndroog fame; and Bishop George Horne, well known for his Commentary on the Psalms, are both buried here.

There have been well-known names connected with Eltham: here lived John Lillburne, who exchanged a captain's buff doublet and morion for a



Quaker's peaceful garb, and was pilloried by one party, and sent to the Tower by their opponents: hither Vandyke would come from the palace and galleries of London to spend his peaceful summer-holiday, changing the busy court for the seclusion and calm of the country; and a fine cedar and a house, still retaining some traces of the style of building that prevailed two centuries ago, mark the home and garden, where Sherard resided, and Dillenius shared his labours, and stored up that learning which procured for him the office of Professor of Botany in the University of Oxford. He has bequeathed to us an affectionate memorial of his friend and patron in the catalogue of plants known as *Hortus Elthamensis*. Messrs. Todman and Macklin still preserve in their nursery-gardens the old tradition of the beauty and excellence of the horticulture of Eltham.

The park, still the property of the Crown, is graced by noble trees; but its oaks royal were devoted years since to the purposes of ship-building, and have been wrought up into many a gallant man-of-war; the deer were destroyed to make venison pasties by the soldiers and country-folks during the Commonwealth. The fair pleasure, the echoing courts, the king's lodging, presence and guard chamber, and the rooms in which the royal attendants and officers of state lodged, have all disappeared. The gateway and high walls of ruddy brick only remain to mark the site of the tiltyard. The moat is half dry, and the sluggish stream, lined with flat banks, carpeted with mossy grass, is still spanned by the bridge of four arches, which is cotemporaneous with the Hall: but the gateway and the "fair front towards the moat," built by Henry VII., have been replaced by two modern houses; and another, with three barge-board gables and corbelled attics to the east of the Hall, retains the designation of the buttery. There is a view of the Hall by Buck, dated 1725, which represents a great portion of the palace, with its quaint water-towers and moated walls still standing; but although Parliament in 1827 spent 700*l.* upon the repairs, the state of the Hall is sad enough now; full of litter of every sort, its windows unglazed or bricked up; with damp fastening in the naked walls, and rough rafters stretching across from side to side and meeting above the corbels. Forsaken as it is, and "to vile usage turned" as a barn, it yet retains traces of its ancient state, and, with a small outlay, might be rendered capable of being a fitting place for the exercise of regal hospitality. It was at once an audience chamber and refectory, for which its grand dimensions well fitted it, one hundred feet in length, fifty-five feet in height, and thirty-six feet broad. It is a perfect specimen of the great Banqueting Halls of the 15th century; the long line of clerestory, each bay composed of couplets of two light windows cinquefoiled and divided by transoms, admit broad streams of cheerful sunshine, which light up the thick trails of ivy that flow over the empty panes; its deep bay windows, with lights of open panels, now stripped of glazing, but enriched with groining and minute tracery, which flanked the dais, betoken the

progress which elegance and security had made at the period of their erection; the lofty walls continue to support a high pitched roof of oak, in tolerable preservation, with hammer-beams, carved pendants, and braces supported on corbels of hewn stone; and, although the royal table, the hearth, and *louvre* have disappeared, there are still remains of the Minstrels' Gallery, and the doorways in the oak screen below it, which led to the capacious kitchen, the butteries, and cellars, to tell each their several tale of former state.

The falcon, the fetter-lock, and rose-en-soleil, sculptured over the chief entrance, are the badges of the royal builder, Edward IV., who is represented by Skelton, as saying:—

"I made Nottingham a palace royal,  
Windsor, Eltham, and many other mo';"

and we can in fancy repeople the deserted hall with its old tenants sitting at the banquet, or making merry with spectacle, dance, and masques; we can recall the stately procession of Elizabeth Woodville, marshalled here to accompany the queen elect to her coronation before the high altar of Westminster, or see her a mother, and crowned, watching with loving eyes the two young princesses whose birth here combined affectionate associations with her new home. Once more grave Bishop Longland shows the plan of the rising Cardinal College at Oxford, built by the munificent Wolsey, to the thoughtful Katharine of Arragon; again Henry the Inconstant whispers here soft words to Katharine Howard, the newly-married pair who have come hither for lover-like seclusion, talking apart in the sunny bay; or the buxom maids of honour, attendants of a third Queen Katharine, the happiest of the three, breakfast here at the long tables on chimes of beef, and drink strong ale poured from the foaming leathern jacks. Once more Queen Mary enters in state with Cardinal Pole and the Lord Montague, while the shouts of ten thousand persons without make the old rafters ring with their cries of welcome; or, a few short years later, Elizabeth, coquetting with the half-witted Earl of Arran, tells him how as a child she was brought hither to breathe a purer air than could be found by the river-side at Greenwich. Then the ideal pageant passes. But an hour ago we were talking of the strange discovery of huge trunks of yew trees, daily dug up in the neighbouring marshes of Plumstead, overwhelmed by the river long years since, and were thinking of the bold archers who came from Cressy, Agincourt, and Poitiers, to form the royal body guard here, when, as we turned unwillingly to take a last look, a placard on a board attracted our notice. It announced that "the 23rd Company of the North Kent Rifles would drill in the Old Hall," on certain days, weekly; and we could not but reflect that if

"The glories of our blood and state  
Are shadows, not substantial things,"

still the brave hearts of England are not degenerate, and that the victorious yew-bow of old days is only exchanged for the rifle of Victoria.